

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS—COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

The Future of Cuba.

From the N. Y. Tribune. There are this day in the United States several thousands of Cubans, and the number is daily increasing. Some of these were driven hither by stress of revolution, as more will be. Nearly all are of the more fortunate class—those, they have been educated, are generally above want, and have more than average intelligence. We see no reason to doubt that they fairly represent the great body of the white and nearly white natives of the "ever faithful" Isle.

Now, when we say that ninety-nine in every hundred of these Cubans are intensely hostile to the subjection of their Isle to the mother country, and anxiously desire its speedy and entire restoration, we know that we are entirely within the truth. And we see no reason to doubt their assurances that the entire mass of the native white Cubans feel and hope as they do—that they not merely desire independence of Spain, but passionately insist on it.

This is not a freak. The feeling has been strong and steadily growing for years. The Cubans feel that Spain has been a step-mother to their bounteous Isle—that she has regularly milked it, and squeezed it, and squeezed it, through her selfish, one-sided laws and edicts; next, through her loudest horde of needy and greedy officials. It is quite moderate to estimate at twenty millions per annum the money drawn from Cuba by Spaniards for services that the Cubans would have much preferred to do without.

The consequences of this rapacious policy were:—1. Remonstrance; 2. Disturb; 3. Alienation; 4. Repugnance; 5. Intense, implacable hate. If the people of Cuba were to-day required to determine by vote whether to remain Spanish or become Turkish, hard as the alternative would be, they would decide at all events not to remain Spanish. And civil war is daily aggravating their hostility to Spanish rule.

Time was, and not long ago, when Spain might have held Cuba by earning and winning the confidence and gratitude of her colored inhabitants. Had the Provisional Government at the outset abolished slavery and affirmed the equal rights of all men, Spain would have retained a powerful party in Cuba; but she let slip the golden moment, allowing the insurgents to proceed in declaring slavery no more, and even now we only fear that the Provisional Government will recommend to the Constituent Cortes that slavery be abolished and precluded. "Thank you for nothing" is the inevitable response of the long-trampled race, already freed by decree of the insurgent chiefs, and enrolled in the ranks of their armies.

We cannot say what may be the result of this spring's campaign or of next summer's yellow fever. Dulce may possibly overrun the island and report the inscription utterly crushed. Cuba may soon have a mockery of representation in the Cortes itself. No one can safely say what a day, a year, may bring forth. We hold this, however, to be morally certain: the Cubans are forever estranged from their mother country; it will cost more to keep their island under Spanish rule than the Spaniards can squeeze out of it; so the establishment and recognition of its independence are questions of time only.

The Tenure-of-Office Law.

From the N. Y. Times. "Whether the Civil Tenure of Office bill be repealed or not, General Grant, or any President as high in the confidence of the country, will find no difficulty in selecting men for executive trusts. He will be able to say that he were even to send to the Senate on the 5th of March names for nine-tenths of the offices, and simply state that he made the removal of the public good, they would be confirmed. Practically, therefore, we see no difficulty in this Civil Tenure-of-Office bill."

Possibly this may be true. We hope it is. We are inclined to believe, indeed, that the general inclination of the Senate will be to confirm General Grant's action in the removal of incompetent office-holders and the appointment of better men in their places. The Senate, as well as the great body of the Republican party, and of the people of the whole country, has confidence in General Grant—in his integrity, his disinterested patriotism and his determination to reform the abuses and correct the evils which entangle and disgrace every branch of the public service. And therefore we think the Senate will be inclined to confirm the appointments, and approve the removals, which he may attempt to make.

But General Grant's ability to accomplish these results ought not to rest on the Senate's disposition at any particular moment. It must be remembered that nearly all the men now in office throughout the country have been put there by the influence of Senators, and that Senators will, therefore, naturally enough not be inclined to favor their removal. The Tribune, we are confident, can easily understand how this works in the case of very many men holding important offices in this city, and so it is throughout the country. The office-holders, as a general thing, are the personal friends of Senators—appointed by their influence, and retaining office under their protection. There is not one of them probably whose removal would not be strenuously resisted by some one Senator, and by as many others as he could induce to sustain him. By promoting an exchange of good offices, in this respect, it will be very easy to form combinations among Senators which will defeat nearly every important removal that General Grant may attempt to make. In a general sense the Senators will be inclined to support General Grant; but when it comes directly to the election from office of their special friends and protégés, they will cling to the men they have put in places of profit, and whose services there are of direct benefit to themselves.

The Tribune, moreover, overlooks the delay which the compliance with the Tenure-of-Office law of necessity involves in the matter of promoting a change of office-holders. Under that law, the President cannot make a removal at all, until after he has been specially authorized so to do by the Senate. He may suspend an officer for twenty days after the meeting of the Senate; but every such suspension must be sent to the Senate, accompanied by the reasons for it—and these reasons must be sent to a committee for inquiry and consideration; and that committee must make a report to the Senate upon the case, and upon that report the action of the Senate must be based. If the Senate approve the suspension, then the President may remove; but not otherwise. Under the most favorable circumstances, and with every disposition on the part of the Senate to meet General Grant's wishes, and to respond to his action, this process involves very great labor and very long delay. But if, in any specific case any Senator desires to prevent the attempted removal, it gives him the power to accomplish that result with absolute certainty.

If the Senate really desire to aid General Grant in purifying the public service of dishonest and incapable incumbents, let it repeal the law by which his hands are tied. That

law confessedly can do no good. Its restraint and restrictions are conceded to be no longer required. No one pretends that General Grant will make appointments or removals in violation of his pledges to the public and his party. Why, then, maintain the law? So long as it remains on the statute book, it is a perpetual menace to the President—a threat designed to secure his good behavior. Justice to General Grant and to the country requires that his law should be untrammelled and that this law should be repealed. The House has already shown that it holds this view and has voted to repeal the law. Why should not the Senate concur?

Opening of the British Parliament.

From the N. Y. Herald. Tuesday afternoon the British Parliament was formally opened. The Queen was not present. The speech was accordingly read by the Lord Chancellor. There is nothing to indicate that the affair was other than tame and uninteresting. It was certainly the duty of her Majesty to be present on this occasion, unless her reasons for absence were good, even irresistible. If the royal figurehead is to continue to be conspicuous for its absence from all State demonstrations, there is reason to fear that the people will begin to regard the whole thing called royalty as at once very expensive and very unnecessary. Such persistent retirement on the part of the Queen can have no good effect on the dynasty.

The royal address, as we have it, does not reveal much. The merits or demerits of the speech must, however, be credited to Mr. Gladstone, and not to the Queen. We should certainly have had a more ringing address had the seals of office been in the hands of Disraeli. Such as it is, however, it is before us. The relations of Great Britain with foreign powers are on an excellent footing. The Paris Conference happily prevented war in the East. It is expected that the negotiations with the United States will place the friendship which ought ever to exist between that country and Great Britain on a firm and durable basis. We very much doubt whether there is good reason for any such expectation. It is not our fault if the British people are misled by the honeyed words of Beveridge Johnson. They have not now long to wait to be undeceived. The New Zealand troubles, we are told, are deplored, but everything will be done to prevent the recurrence of such unhappy events. Economy, coupled with efficiency, is to be characteristic of the new administration. Ireland comes in for special attention. The continued suppression of the habeas corpus is considered unnecessary, and the attention of Parliament is directed to the arrangements about to be submitted to it for the final and satisfactory adjustment of ecclesiastical affairs in that portion of the empire. The wisdom of Parliament is it is hoped, will "efface the memory of past contentions and cherish the sympathies of an affectionate people." We shall see. Parliament has certainly enough work on hand, and it promises to be lively.

The News from Cuba.

From the N. Y. Herald. The intelligence from Havana is of a very important character. It will be seen that Count Valmaceda, who is operating in the Eastern Department, has been forced to send a portion of his column to St. Jago to save that city from capture by the Cubans, while from the Central Department there is a significant intimation on the part of the Spanish troops. A new and formidable movement has broken out in the Villa Clara district, involving all the sugar region of Cienfuegos and Trinidad. At Cardenas several arrests have been made, including the British Consul. But the appearance of insurgents at Guanajay and San Cristobal, places west of Havana which have hitherto been quiet, and the advantages obtained there over the Spaniards are of great significance. They prove that the revolution has acquired a new impulse, and indicate that it will speedily involve all of the Western Department.

The feeling of hatred between Cubans and Spaniards is acquiring greater intensity, and the youth are leaving the towns to take their places in the field. This feeling has its dark side for our own citizens resident in Cuba, and a representation has been sent to Washington stating that Americans are being arrested, but no measures can be taken in their behalf because Captain-General Dulce denies to the Consul-General of the United States diplomatic functions. The Consul may be forced to leave Havana, and while American citizens are being arrested without charges against them, obstructions are placed by the Government in the way of others who wish to leave the island. We trust that the Cabinet at Washington will take this matter into immediate consideration, and issue instructions to Admiral Hoff, now at Havana, to see that injustice is not done to our citizens there. It is no time to refer wrongs three thousand miles across the Atlantic, to Madrid, where no actual government exists. In the absence of instructions from Washington Admiral Hoff will do well to remember that the country expects him to do his duty in the premises with the same spirit which animated Ingraham in the Costa case. We would suggest to General Grant that the office of Consul-General at Havana has for a long time been administered by a clerk of the State Department, and it will be well to have a Consul-General ready to send to Havana very soon after the 4th of March.

General Grant's Administration.

From the N. Y. Times. The Tribune says that if we "have any doubt about General Grant's position on reconstruction, we can easily ascertain his views from his speeches." But we haven't the slightest. He regards it as substantially accomplished—as belonging to the past, like the war—as completely provided for by the laws already on the statute-book, and to be carried into full and complete effect like any other laws. We infer from his "speeches," as well as from the general tenor of his acts, that he does not consider reconstruction to be the great end to be accomplished by his administration—not yet the elevation of the negro, nor the establishment of universal suffrage. "Economy, retrenchment, faithful collection of the revenue, and payment of the public debt," are the practical objects which he thinks his election was intended to secure.

There are men who think these matters of trifling importance, and that this view of his position and duties is very low and ignoble. He ought to rise to a higher appreciation of his duty and his destiny. Instead of confining his action to these mere matters of detail—to these paltry problems of dollars and cents—Mr. Wendell Phillips, for example, insists that he should devote himself and all the influence of his position, to the great work of doing justice to the negro, and making him every way the equal of the white man. Mayor Hall is disposed to leave to "mere politicians" the paltry subjects of "revenue and finance," and to devote himself to the "regeneration of Ireland."

But General Grant evidently does not put so low an estimate upon the questions of revenue, of taxation, and of debt, and the other practical matters that enter into the material prosperity of the country, as do these specu-

lative philosophers. He is for exacting the law, collecting the revenue, cutting off all needless expenses, and paying the debt. This is the simple, practical, matter-of-fact process by which he seeks to promote the prosperity of the nation and the welfare of the people. In the view of theorists and ambitious speculators, this may indicate a very low estimate of the nature and ends of government, an utterly inadequate appreciation of the work that Divine Providence has appointed us to do. But, after all, we believe it to be the view which the great body of the people take of the necessities of the country and the duties of the Executive—and we believe, moreover, that General Grant will have the cordial support of the Republican party in conducting his administration on the theory which it implies. Government, after all, is a practical affair—not a matter of speculation. It aims at practical results, not at the establishment of theories or the illustration of the ideas of philosophers. It is important, doubtless, that the negro should have justice and equal rights; but it is still more important that, in common with the rest of the community, he should have peace, order, a faithful execution of the laws, and exemption from all needless and oppressive burdens. All experience proves that nothing so depraves and degrades a government, in all its parts, as corruption in the management of its revenues, and dishonesty in the discharge of its obligations. These abuses must be reformed at once, as the basis and condition of all other reforms.

Our politicians and public men have been absorbed, for the last few years, in the discussion of abstract theories—in settling theories of government and of human rights, and in framing laws which should suit the ideas and meet the demands of speculative men. There has been much more of this in our legislation than of careful inquiry into the material requirements of the country, and of wise provisions to meet them. We have been more anxious that rights should be extended than that the public interest should be promoted. It is time that we would give attention to the practical wants and necessities of the country, in order to promote the welfare and prosperity of its people. We infer, from his speeches and his acts, that General Grant takes substantially this view of the subject, and that his administration will seek to reform evils and abuses in practical affairs, far more than to illustrate theories or give effect to the speculative notions of political doctrinaires. And in this he will certainly have the approval and support of the Republican party and of the country at large.

The Suffrage Amendment.

From the N. Y. World. On Monday Mr. Colfax saved his fellow-radicals, by a Speaker's ruling, from voting down Senator Buckle's proposition (offered too late by Judge Woodward) to submit the suffrage amendment to the legislatures whose lower branch shall be elected after Congress shall have proposed it. But the proposition would have been voted down had Mr. Woodward been permitted by the Speaker to offer it.

Congress knows that the suffrage amendment would be voted down by the people; that before it takes good pains to prevent its submission to the people. It refuses to submit the amendment to conventions assembled by the people to the duty of voting upon it. It will submit the amendment only to the bodies now in session, which are mostly Republican, and which are such because the Chicago platform, whilst asserting the authority of Congress over suffrage in the Rebel States, equally asserted that "the question of suffrage in all the loyal States properly belongs to the people of those States." This resolution was framed to keep the radicals in power. The amendment stillifies the platform, but it has the same end in view, consistency and political honor will be sacrificed complacently in nearly every State. Congressmen know their party. There will be no bolters. Even the Times will advocate the amendment to "nationalize" suffrage with just as much ardor as it advocated the platform that declared suffrage to properly belong to the people of the Northern States.

Thus the radical party stultify themselves in their political character; thus they confess the absence of political honor or concern therewith; thus they violate their pledges to one another and to the country; thus they disturb the country's peace; thus they refuse to the people of the country, and confer upon their elected partisans, the power to alter our fundamental law—and all to the end of perpetuating their own domination. Doubtless, "the Democratic party is dead" once more!

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They were subjected to the most intense heat, and it affords us much pleasure to inform you that after recovering them from the ruins, we found upon examination that our books, papers, and other valuables were all in perfect condition.

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